

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
BOARD OF ETHICS AND GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY



Office of Government Ethics  
Darrin P. Sobin, Director  
Asia Stewart-Mitchell, Attorney Advisor

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***Ethically Speaking***  
***The BEGA Newsletter***

**Message from the Director**

Is your agency viewed as one of the highly ethical agencies of the District Government? It all begins with Financial Disclosure Statement (FDS) compliance and an agency's reporting obligations. Yes, it's that time of year again – FDS Season. In order for BEGA to successfully oversee the FDS process, we rely on agencies to meet the three reporting deadlines 1) **March 1** – submission of a list of Public FDS filers to BEGA; 2) **May 1** – submission of a list of Confidential FDS filers to BEGA; 3) **June 1** – submission of a report to BEGA identifying non-compliant employees and any conflicts of interest (confidential filers file their FDS forms with the agency on May 15<sup>th</sup>). This year BEGA will be issuing a **Certificate of Excellence** to all agencies that timely comply with these reporting requirements and the agency will be recognized on the BEGA website. Don't miss out! This is a great way to demonstrate to the public how seriously your agency views ethics in government.

*Darrin P. Sobin – Director*

**BEGA Happenings –**

- **2017 Oversight Hearings**
  - ❖ BEGA recently testified before the D.C. Council's Committee on Judiciary & Public Safety. Watch the video [here](#) [1:40:20].
- **2017 Financial Disclosure Statements**
  - ❖ Financial Disclosure Statement season is upon us! You can find frequently asked questions about the form [here](#), our training materials [here](#), and step by step instructions [here](#).

**Ethics In the News –**

- [City of San Antonio receives ethics complaint from former city councilman](#)
- [West Virginia House of Representatives passes government ethics and whistleblower bills](#)
- [After repealing ethics law, South Dakota considers creating a “State Government Accountability Board”](#)
- [Lobbyist fined \\$11,380 for inviting mayor of Los Angeles to his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday party](#)
- [Ethics board fines former campaign manager \\$90,000 for lobbying without being registered as a lobbyist](#)

**Upcoming Events –**

- March 9, 2017 - BEGA Monthly Board Meeting - 441 4<sup>th</sup> St. NW, Suite 540 South
- March 14, 2017 – Ethics Training - 441 4<sup>th</sup> St. NW, Suite 540 South
- May 15, 2017 – Financial Disclosure Statements due

**Good to Know – Failure to File Financial Disclosure Statements**

The filing of financial disclosure statements is mandated in the “Ethics Act”. The Director of BEGA has the discretion to bring an enforcement action against any non-compliant designated filers. A D.C. government employee who has been designated by his/her agency as either a public financial disclosure statement filer or a confidential financial disclosure statement filer can be fined up to \$5,000 (among other penalties) as a result of a finding that he/she failed to file a financial disclosure statement or filed a false and/or incomplete financial disclosure statement, pursuant to sections 221(a)(1)-(2) of the “Ethics Act”. In addition to penalties resulting from an enforcement action the Director is authorized to assess ministerial fines for non-compliance without bringing an enforcement action, pursuant to section 221(a)(3) of the “Ethics Act”.

**If you have any questions, we can be reached at 202-481-3411, or through our website at [www.bega-dc.gov](http://www.bega-dc.gov)**